

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

RACE TO THE TOP

GRANT REVIEW

Phase 1 Tier 2 State Presentation

The State of Louisiana

8:30 a.m.

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Holiday Inn Capitol Hill

550 C Street. S.W.

Washington, D.C.

1 P R O C E E D I N G S

2 [Introductions not transcribed.]

3 MR. PASTOREK: Thank you all very much.

4 Louisiana is honored to be here. I think back
5 on the middle '80s when I first got involved in public
6 education, and I think back on the conversation I had
7 with a principal at the time, who told me that it was
8 very difficult to deal with the middle schoolers, and I
9 said is it true that about 60 percent of these children
10 can't read above the third grade level, and she said yes.

11 I said what are you doing about that, and she
12 said I am focusing on the 40 percent of the kids who can.

13 Now, I was as practicing lawyer at the time,
14 but I became very invested in public education. My kids
15 went to private school. But it is because of that, that
16 we are real humble, because we come from that to where we
17 are today.

18 Where we are today is a much better place, but
19 we have a mission yet to finish, and that mission is to
20 become a world class education system in Louisiana.

21 So, we are here today because we believe we
22 have the motivation, and we believe we have the right

1 approach, we believe we have a proven track record. We
2 believe we have a commitment for broad impact across the
3 State, and we believe we have the capacity to execute it.

4 Now, we have been successful over the years.
5 We started a very strong accountability program in the
6 early '90s. I served on the State Board of Education in
7 1996, and a lot of good people put together a very strong
8 accountability system back then, and we found good
9 progress, and that progress led us to hire academic
10 achievement overall, and surprisingly, eliminating -- not
11 eliminating -- but really narrowing the gap on
12 achievement between races and between classes in
13 Louisiana.

14 So, we were very fortunate and as we put in our
15 application, that Ed Trust identified Louisiana as the
16 only state in the country that was able to close the
17 achievement gap in fourth grade reading and eighth grade
18 math.

19 Our charter schools have been recognized as
20 doing better than the traditional schools, counter to
21 some of the national trends. Our accountability system
22 has moved our kids far, but our system is by no means a

1 world class educational system.

2 In fact, today, more than 200,000 children in
3 Louisiana are at the low grade level out of about 650,000
4 children, about 30 percent of our kids.

5 We have moved a great deal. We have been able
6 to make a big difference in a lot of children's lives,
7 but we have a long distance to go. We are determined to
8 get to world class education. In fact, the Board
9 adopted, our Board of Education, when I was hired back in
10 March of 2007, and began my job on April 1st, 2007, not
11 quite three years ago.

12 My board adopted a vision to build world class
13 education in Louisiana. So, I have to tell you, when you
14 look at facts like this and you tell people in the State
15 of Louisiana we are going to build world class education,
16 there is a bit of a disconnect, and it has been hard for
17 three years to push that vision.

18 But, you know, if you don't create the right
19 vision, you will certainly never achieve it, so we have
20 been pushing it, and we have a wonderful team of people
21 here today. We have a wonderful team back in the state.

22 I want to introduce this team to you. I want

1 to start on the far end, Glenny Buquet. Glenny is a
2 former teacher, classroom teacher, reading teacher, a
3 passionate advocate for dyslexic kids, and she serves on
4 our State Board of Education. She has led the effort on
5 teacher quality in Louisiana since 1999 by serving on the
6 Blue Ribbon Commission for Higher Ed in Capewell and by
7 pushing for ultimately our value-added assessment model
8 of our teacher preparation programs in Louisiana.

9 To her right is Karen Carter Peterson, now
10 Senator, formerly House member from New Orleans. Karen
11 authored legislation in the early 2000s, in 2004, that
12 created the early recovery school district and the early
13 changes, which ultimately led to the real successes that
14 we have in Louisiana, received an award from the Profiles
15 in Courage award from the Kennedy School.

16 Paul Vallas, who is a wonderful man, who has
17 come to us amazingly from Chicago and Philly, and works
18 in New Orleans for the last three years I guess, and Paul
19 has done a phenomenal job of dealing with our portfolio
20 management style in the Recovery School District, who
21 brought the knowledge that he developed in Philly around
22 portfolio management and use of charters, university-led

1 schools, traditional schools, and in portfolio management
2 style, and has really brought it to a fine level of form
3 in New Orleans, and to good effect.

4 Finally, returning to her home state, Rayne
5 Martin comes back to us after graduating from high school
6 in North Louisiana, and coming back to New Orleans after
7 the storm and working for the Recovery School District,
8 and has worked her way up from technology chief and now
9 the chief of staff to Paul Vallas. Rayne will be the
10 person who will lead our effort on Race to the Top should
11 we be lucky enough to get this award.

12 Now, let's talk about the four assurances, and
13 I want to tell you how we see these four assurances. We
14 believe these are the right assurances, in fact, we have
15 been working on these assurances, but what we have tried
16 to do in our application is make these four assurances
17 work in such a way that they all drive for the teacher
18 effectiveness speech, that they all drive for the leader
19 effectiveness speech, they are all done in concert with,
20 because we believe the core value of our plan is the
21 teacher and leader effectiveness piece.

22 Now, on the standards and assessment assurance,

1 we have pushed very hard before Race to the Top to raise
2 our accountability part. We originally identified
3 academically unacceptable schools. In 2001, we increased
4 the bar, in 2003, and again in 2006, and in January, just
5 before this application was filed, yet again.

6 By raising this accountability bar, we create a
7 pressure to change. We have tried to create some support
8 for change, but we recognize that Race to the Top allows
9 us the opportunity to create greater support, because we
10 believe in the Michael Pullen principle that pressure and
11 support are what is necessary to be able to be successful
12 in this endeavor.

13 In addition, focusing on data systems, we have
14 worked hard to meet all of the complete elements of the
15 data systems and believe we are there. We have linked
16 data through many different ways, but the big way that we
17 have linked data is through our teacher
18 preparation programs. That has been going on now for
19 three years as you know, and we have actually started now
20 to move to thin the herd as a consequence of those.

21 In fact, the University of Louisiana at
22 Lafayette, which was one of the poor performers in the

1 evaluation process, has closed its program as we pointed
2 out to any new teachers until they fix their program.

3 This is a remarkable event in our history.

4 We have had an amazing courage in a culture of
5 reform around turning around low achieving schools, and
6 this is not new to us. This is what the recovery school
7 district is about. This is what Karen Peterson is about,
8 who lived in New Orleans and saw the horror of New
9 Orleans for so many years.

10 Building this place where we can remove the
11 barriers, remove the challenges, bring in new people,
12 bring in new energy, new zeal, and enthusiasm, and as
13 Paul has so eloquently and magnificently done, really
14 moved the needle on the turnaround of schools. This has
15 now been in place for five years, and we have been able
16 to bring in almost 9 percent of the schools in the state
17 and to the recovery school district.

18 Now, the last mile or the finish for us is to
19 work really hard on the teacher leader effectiveness
20 piece, and that is what I will talk about here now. We
21 believe there are really three major principles that we
22 need to focus on.

1 One is measurement and I will say measurement
2 and differentiation are really one principle in my mind.
3 We need to measure the effectiveness of teachers and
4 differentiate who is doing well and who is not doing
5 well, and how we will deal with them, and then these
6 other two boxes that come to how we will deal with them.

7 For those who we can work with, we are going to
8 work hard for me to improve them, and that will be many
9 of our teachers. We have to have a strong strategy
10 around working with them, and I think we have outlined
11 that in a number of different ways.

12 But for those teachers who are persistently
13 ineffective, we have to find a way to replenish that with
14 our pipeline. Now, I want to talk about the measurement
15 of teacher/leader effectiveness. We propose our
16 comprehensive performance management system. Fifty
17 percent of the evaluation is based on value added.

18 We did get agreement with the American
19 Federation of Teachers on this. The Louisiana
20 Association of Educators was reluctant to agree to 50
21 percent, and they would have preferred us to stay with 40
22 percent. The Association of Professional Educators in

1 Louisiana, a non-union professional association of
2 educators almost equal the size of the other two each,
3 was fully an endorsement of this plan.

4 Now, we also have developed this approach where
5 we are going to give flexibility to develop the other 50
6 percent. We are going to work closely with the districts
7 to develop the other 50 percent, and when we lock in on
8 that, it will then be applied statewide.

9 On the differentiation, we want to be able to
10 have some effect coming from this identification and
11 measurement of features. One of the effects would deal
12 with the granting of tenure, and, in fact, this is where
13 we had a real good solid lock with the American
14 Federation of Teacher Affiliate in Louisiana.

15 They agreed that if we were to do this and
16 really look hard at who we grant tenure to, it would give
17 greater value and respect to those who are tenured, and
18 so they really bought into this in a big way, and it was
19 a powerful milestone with our relationship.

20 Also, in the elimination of quality blind
21 surplussing and where we have people who are not really
22 performing well, and they get foisted off on other

1 people. In our commitment here, we are committing not to
2 do that, not to do that to other people.

3 Part of the reason why we have these other data
4 systems that principals will have access to is that they
5 will know who is who and where they are coming from in
6 the circumstances.

7 So, there will be some who do not make it, and
8 you see in our application that we have identified a
9 percent of teachers out there who we think are
10 ineffective by the standard that we have developed.

11 You will recognize that there was a number of
12 those people who we can professional develop and bring
13 them to a place where they can be effective. We can
14 target our professional development to those people, but
15 there will be some who will not.

16 So, we have already demonstrated over the last
17 two years in the Recovery School District that we can
18 bring over 500 new teachers into our system through a
19 strong recruiting and working with our partners to new
20 teacher projects, Teach for America, and the Leaders for
21 New Schools to be able to bring those people in line.

22 We are actually working with a number of other

1 partners and the universities to do that. We believe we
2 can ramp that up on additional 500 teachers per year.

3 We believe we can get 1,000 teachers per year,
4 so to the extent that we have a number of teachers who
5 are large, that we would have to replace, we believe that
6 we can make the pipeline work so that we can remove those
7 who are persistently ineffective.

8 Now, professional development is a critical
9 function of our operations as an education system. What
10 we try to do in this discussion in our application is
11 separate responsibility for the professional development.
12 We are going to carry certain responsibilities, and the
13 local districts are going to carry other
14 responsibilities.

15 We believe that professional development is
16 best done in the schoolhouse. We believe it is best done
17 by the people who are there and by their supporters in
18 the district, but we also believe that there are standard
19 and strategies that should be used, and we can lay those
20 out, and we can work with the districts to be able to
21 make that happen.

22 Now, you know, when I talk to people about this

1 world class education system and sometimes they look at
2 me like I have lost my mind, I have to tell them that we
3 have proof that it is happening, because if there is no
4 proof that it is happening, it is at a disconnect that
5 you can't prove.

6 So, in our case, in Louisiana, we have proof
7 that it is happening, and that is the really exciting
8 part. I was actually challenged one day early on in this
9 job by a local school board member, and I went there to
10 talk about taking over schools in Baton Rouge.

11 The school board member challenged me and said
12 you can't prove you can do any better, and the reason I
13 know you can't prove you do any better is because no one
14 has done better. There are no such things as high
15 poverty, high minority schools that do well successfully.

16 Now, the interesting part of the problem was I
17 couldn't name a school. I knew there were, but I
18 couldn't name them. So, he got me, but I got him,
19 because we ended up putting together a list of what we
20 call the high poverty, high performing schools three
21 years ago.

22 There were 20 schools at the time. Today there

1 are 35. Those 35 schools have a greater than 65 percent
2 population of poor, those 35 schools are in the top
3 quartile of schools in the State of Louisiana. Those
4 schools prove that it can be done.

5 In our application, we talk about taking those
6 high poverty, high performing principals and having them
7 work with high poverty, low performing schools, so that
8 we can translate the effects and the belief system that
9 it can be done by demonstrating here are real people who
10 can do it.

11 High poverty, high performing schools are an
12 example; TAP school are an example. We are a strong
13 believer in the Teacher Advancement Program, and the
14 reason is it combines almost all of the teacher
15 strategies, the human capital strategies that are set
16 forth in this application, that are required of us.

17 Although we have a pay-for-performance, we have
18 a value-added assessment, we have a pay for promotion, we
19 have a promotion-for-performance system, and also we have
20 a strong professional development and professional
21 learning community strategy in the Teacher Advancement
22 Program schools.

1 Then, I would say in the Recovery School
2 District. Now, we put these charts in the appendix, I
3 wish they would have been on the first page, because
4 these are remarkable charts. These are schools that have
5 been in the Recovery School District for three years or
6 more, and we are looking at the second and third year of
7 growth in those schools.

8 Now, we see the line here of the average state
9 growth is about 4 points on what we call our school
10 performance score, but these schools in two-thirds to
11 three-quarters of the cases where we are testing in the
12 fourth grade English language Arts are showing dramatic
13 gains.

14 Now, let's be candid, we are dealing with
15 schools that are very low to start with, so you would
16 expect to see these, but these gains are pretty stunning.
17 Now, at the same time, here is eighth grade ELA.

18 At the same time you will see schools that are
19 not performing very well. Now in this case we are taking
20 these schools and doing a new turnaround with them or
21 transformation or closing down or chartering.

22 We actually have a model now where we take the

1 four lowest achieving schools each year in the Recovery
2 School District, and show that those schools are not
3 performing well, they are taken out of business, and we
4 have these transformation school models that we put in,
5 in order to address that.

6 Now, I think that we have a strategy that has
7 impacted and will impact the entire state. Many of the
8 bold reforms that we have already adopted already apply
9 across the state, the Recovery School District applies
10 across the state. For example, when we just move the bar
11 in the Recovery School District for the schools that will
12 be eligible for takeover, we just moved it in January
13 from 60 to 75, another 225 schools are at risk of being
14 taken over by the Recovery School District.

15 So, whether those schools are participating
16 LEAs or not, those schools are at risk, and being at risk
17 causes them to want to change, so what we believe is
18 going to happen is when they see success happening in our
19 schools in the participating LEAs, they are going to rush
20 for the same strategies.

21 In fact, in most of the cases that we are
22 building models, we are building platforms, technology

1 platforms, professional development technology platforms,
2 all of that can be scaled up to the rest of the state.

3 So, we think that it does have broad impact,
4 and we would also recognize that in much the same as Race
5 to the Top, is built where we talk about a system that
6 targets those who are really ready for change.

7 We have taken the same approach. So, for
8 example, we sent out to our districts after most
9 everybody passed the Race to the Top, we recognized that
10 we weren't sure that everybody really wanted to make the
11 deep dive.

12 We wanted to be sure they wanted to make the
13 deep dive, that this just wasn't raising your hand so I
14 can get some money to deal with my situation. So, after
15 we got a 95 percent intent to participate, we took a
16 pretty unusual step I think, and we sent a letter, and we
17 told every district here are the top 10 things you are
18 going to have to be willing to do.

19 These top 10 things are recognizing that you
20 are going to have to agree the job in better professional
21 development taking time in the school day, because you
22 are going to have to deal with your teachers to do that.

1 That is a responsibility you are going to have to assume,
2 so it's not just you are going to agree to professional
3 development however that looks, it is going to have to be
4 job embedded, and you are going to have to take time.

5 We are going to educate teachers who are going
6 to educate children with effective teachers, and you are
7 going to move teachers if you have to move them.

8 You are going to have to move them if you have
9 to educate children well. We are going to have a
10 compensation system that rewards teachers and leaders.

11 We are going to dismiss persistently
12 ineffective teachers. We mean business, we are serious
13 about this.

14 Now, I will tell you it was as leap in faith to
15 want to send a letter off to people saying be careful
16 what you ask for, we want you to participate, but I
17 really do believe it is consistent with the strategy of
18 Race to the Top that we want to be with those people that
19 not only have the desire, but have the capacity and where
20 the conditions are right, because if the conditions
21 aren't right, we are not going to be successful.

22 So, I want to show you how the fire has started

1 already in Louisiana and where I think this will all go.
2 Back when Karen worked on the legislation to allow for
3 the schools to be taken over before the storm in the
4 Recovery School District, there were four whole school in
5 the recovery school district in 2004.

6 That changed right after the storm where the
7 entire city of New Orleans, schools, almost all were
8 placed in the Recovery School District. Then, another
9 real dramatic change occurred in Louisiana. We talk
10 about this in the application.

11 We decided the Recovery School District is not
12 just for New Orleans, it is for all low achieving
13 schools, so we began to take schools in Baton Rouge and
14 Shreveport, and put over 27 or 28 schools I think under
15 MOUs which are a strong supervisory agreement, which
16 allows us, if they don't follow certain approaches, to
17 take over those schools.

18 In fact, Glenny Lee voted to take over one of
19 those schools just this past week, because we are not
20 making progress on MOUs.

21 Now, with Race to the Top, we picked up another
22 portion of the State, 40 percent of the districts, 47

1 percent of kids, and we believe that this fire, which is
2 racing across Louisiana, will have changed the way we do
3 business, is going to ultimately take over the entire
4 state.

5 We believe it will, because there is so much
6 momentum for this. There are many other people who are
7 now catching the idea that we can do world class
8 education. We are actually having conversations in
9 normal people talk where we talk about world class, and
10 that wasn't the case three years ago.

11 Now, we believe we have the capacity to
12 execute, we believe we have a very good plan. I have to
13 give credit to Rayne actually drove the writing of this
14 document, she drove like a taskmaster. There are four
15 other department and RFP employees, two of each, who
16 actually wrote this document, designed our human capital,
17 Elizabeth Shaw designed our human capital strategy. She
18 works for Paul in Recovery School District.

19 Betty Jean Wolf and Jill Slack, my reading
20 specialist, and one of Paul's employees, actually did the
21 grant writing piece on it, Rayne oversaw it, and Dr.
22 George Nowell, who is our tremendous asset and did value

1 added, built our value-added system, and is nationally
2 recognized helped us build this, as well.

3 I think we have the people, we have people out
4 in the field, people all focused on leaning forward in
5 the foxhole here, trying to go forward and build world
6 class education in Louisiana. We have the political
7 will, Karen is evidence of that, but there are many other
8 people who would like to be here today to demonstrate
9 their support politically for this, and we have the
10 performance, I think, that shows that we are moving in
11 the right direction and that we are willing to take on
12 the top challenges, fight the political fights that need
13 to be fought for the benefit of those 200,000 kids and
14 the other 450,000 kids who also need a better education
15 in Louisiana.

16 So, we have, I think, demonstrated in our
17 application, clearly, that our children can't wait any
18 longer for adults to get their act together. We are
19 trying to get our act together, and we believe we have
20 done that, and we believe we have enough people that are
21 motivated to really make a difference and get statewide
22 impact.

1 We believe we have the right approach by
2 focusing on teachers. The research is clear and
3 unambiguous that this is the leading piece for being
4 successful.

5 We believe we have a proven track record. We
6 have reforms already in place, some to scale, and we
7 believe we can scale up even more, and that is the whole
8 key. We need to get from where we are now, which is a
9 small amount of support, for a large problem in our
10 state, and we need to scale up, not -- we can't go to 100
11 percent all at one time -- but to scale up in step, so
12 that we can get to 100 percent.

13 We believe if we can get these participating
14 LEAs on board, and support, you're offering, we can be
15 successful. We have commitment for these reforms, and we
16 have the people to do it, and no obstacles to success.

17 Then, I would like to close out by saying that
18 it is our hope that we can finish strong as adults,
19 because children are counting on us. It is our hope that
20 if we finish strong in this competition that our children
21 will be the beneficiaries.

22 You know, sometimes we get a little despondent

1 in the good old State of Louisiana, in fact, around our
2 football team we have been despondent for many years, but
3 you know, the football experience, though, is really not
4 important in the big scheme of things, it is a tremendous
5 paradigm for what we are doing.

6 You have got to have a vision for winning the
7 Superbowl, you have got to have it, and, you know, it is
8 hard, believe me, three years ago it would have been hard
9 for anybody to have a vision of winning the Superbowl in
10 Louisiana, and three years ago it would have been hard
11 for anybody to imagine we would be a finalist.

12 But being finalist isn't adult satisfaction and
13 gratification, we don't want to be a finalist, we want to
14 finish strong, we want to bring the resources to be able
15 to transition to the place that we know we need to be.
16 We believe we have been moving in this direction in fits
17 and starts with probably not all the resources in the
18 capacity we need to have, but we really believe that if
19 we get this rank, and we get the resources, the kind of
20 support that is needed desperately in our state, we will
21 save 200,000 kids.

22 So, we appreciate your time, we appreciate the

1 Department for this opportunity, and are very hopeful
2 that we will be successful. Thank you.

3 MS.(Inaudible): Thank you very much. I am
4 sorry to be a little late getting --

5 MS. (Inaudible): We were watching, you have 20
6 seconds left.

7 [Simultaneous speaking.]

8 Reviewer #1: Good morning, and thank you, Mr.
9 Pastorek, for a very thorough overview for us.

10 We, as a panel, have approximately 10 questions
11 for you. They are major questions. They are general,
12 but tied to some very specific aspects of questions we
13 had regarding your proposal. We have 60 minutes, and I
14 am going to stop talking, so we can hear from you, but we
15 will run through in an ordered way. Thank you for the
16 great start and we look forward to continuing.

17 Reviewer #2 will launch us into this.

18 Reviewer #2: Thank you very much. I would ask
19 if someone your team could explain how you are going to
20 achieve the Race to the Top's high priority around
21 statewide impact, because you noted in your presentation
22 and in your application the percentage of the student

1 population that is currently shaped by the number of
2 districts that signed up, and it is only 47 percent.

3 So, what I would like to hear a little more
4 about is how that is going to get you to a much higher
5 level.

6 MR. PASTOREK: Well, let me start. Let me say
7 that we are looking at some very challenged districts
8 that are in our participating LEAs. Let me give you a
9 couple of examples. We have East Carroll Parish in the
10 Delta in Northeast Louisiana, Madison Parish, St. Helena
11 Parish, Baker. These districts are in really dire
12 circumstances, and we believe that there are obviously
13 many others that are like that, that are not
14 participating in Race to the Top.

15 We believe that there are obviously many others
16 that are like that, that are not participating in Race to
17 the Top, and we believe that if we are going to be
18 successful with just, for example, the Delta parishes, we
19 are going to have to have the capacity to really show
20 success, and we are going to have to have the conditions
21 for success.

22 We believe that when we do succeed in those

1 parishes, it will press the other parishes into success.
2 We have actually created a vehicle in the application
3 where we have a grant award that we are going to make to
4 non-participating LEAs.

5 In an effort to have them become involved
6 during the course of the grant application period or the
7 grant period, so we are going to give grants for each of
8 the four years to those who are not participating, so
9 that they can begin to take some of the successes that I
10 think we are going to demonstrate and extrapolate them
11 into other districts.

12 Now, I think it would be frankly disingenuous
13 of us to suggest that we would be able to go into all or
14 most of the Delta parishes and succeed.

15 I think the resources that we are being
16 offered, while a lot and while we have asked for more
17 than what has been bracketed for us, I don't think that
18 the amount of resources would be adequate, frankly, to be
19 able to go into all of the Delta parishes, at least not
20 at first, and not until we see the sense of success,
21 because at the end of the day, capacity and belief on the
22 part of those people has to be present, too.

1 So, I think that we made a very concerted
2 judgment to target what we thought we could manage with
3 the resources that we had given the nature of the
4 challenge that we have, and let's face it, the challenge
5 in Louisiana is far greater than the challenge in many of
6 the other states that are finalists.

7 Again, I just don't want to be disingenuous, I
8 think we have got to focus on what we can, but
9 recognizing that when we do, it is going to ramp up, and
10 then I think the other point I would like to make -- and
11 I am going to offer Mr. Vallas an opportunity to respond
12 here -- the other point I would like to make is that many
13 of the systems that we are talking about building can
14 easily be translated to other districts, so let's just
15 take, for example, the human capital information system
16 where we are going to talk about who is doing well, how
17 they are doing well, whether they are not, and then
18 reporting that information to principals.

19 I think once people see that system, it is
20 easily translated even into the Delta parishes, so a lot
21 of the infrastructure that we are talking about building
22 is easily transferable, and that is why I believe that

1 while we may start with the amount that we have, and we
2 have the conditions there, we have an easy capacity to
3 translate and many of these things we are talking about
4 building do translate.

5 Reviewer #1: So you are clear, we are about 6
6 minutes in, so we have got to hear from you, but --

7 MR. PASTOREK: And you have got 10 questions.

8 MR. VALLAS: I will be real quick. First of
9 all, there are a number of reforms that are going to have
10 statewide impact like the adoption of the common
11 standards, obviously, the raising of the SPS scores, the
12 implementation of the statewide benchmarking system,
13 obviously, the standardized curriculum model is already
14 out there, so there are a number of reforms, the push of
15 TAP statewide, that are going to impact everybody.

16 In fact, some of the reforms that are going to
17 impact everybody will rival some of the reforms that have
18 been included in many applications, just for schools
19 participating in Race to the Top, that is number one.

20 Number two, as Paul pointed out, 28 districts,
21 50 percent of the kids, they are going what I would
22 commonly refer to as the full montan, in other words, 100

1 full participation from day one.

2 Number three, if you look at the application,
3 everything that is being done in Louisiana, we are
4 realigning, not only administration, but we are also
5 realigning and reprogramming local dollars, I think close
6 to \$200 million to invest in Race to the Top.

7 Then, finally, number four, any district that
8 is not participating in Race to the Top, that continues
9 to struggle, will ultimately find themselves in the
10 Recovery School District where Race to the Top-type
11 reforms are going to be imposed.

12 So, everybody is being brought along, but the
13 districts that are participating are participating at 100
14 percent, basically full capacity from day one.

15 Reviewer #1: Reviewer # 3, do you want to
16 follow up on this at all?

17 Reviewer #3: Please. Thanks, Reviewer #1.

18 You mentioned a couple of times about how you
19 were going to use grants to entice non-participating
20 schools into these reforms, and you were also talking
21 about creating systems that people would naturally want
22 to sign onto.

1 This is a metaphor for why nobody in Louisiana
2 smokes, because everybody know that tobacco is bad for
3 you, but I am sure you still have citizens who buy
4 cigarettes. I am interested in what sort of theory or
5 assumptions you are making about how you are able to
6 scale up these reforms.

7 MS. CARTER PETERSON: What we have that is
8 unique from any other applicant that I think you will see
9 in this process is this Recovery School District , this
10 model that many states are implementing across the
11 country right now.

12 What happens is these local school districts in
13 the local superintendent's and even the teachers see the
14 Recovery School District in some ways as a threat. No
15 one wants to lose local control. No superintendent want
16 to lose their job, no school board member wants to look
17 bad to their constituency.

18 Ultimately, it is pride in the system and it is
19 teachers wanting to do the job of making sure that their
20 children are successful in their classroom. So, what we
21 have seen is that from the reforms that have taken place
22 over the last decade is that many of these participating

1 LEEs are participating as a result of this RSD model.

2 What is where the impetus and the interest
3 comes from and success. Of course, you don't go to work
4 every day not wanting to be successful, but we need the
5 tools.

6 So, what this will do, this opportunity with
7 the Race to the Top will give us the opportunity to build
8 the capacity needed for teacher effectiveness and
9 leadership that we have not been able to do so it's in
10 the implementation phase.

11 We are in a different phase than anyone else in
12 the Race to the Top. We are at a different place. We
13 have this RSD system in place and many people are trying
14 to get to where we are, but with your help, we can finish
15 strong.

16 MR. PASTOREK: I would just have one little
17 piece. A lot of people are anxious about participation
18 because they are not sure where the human capital is
19 really going to come from. I have gone to many, many
20 districts where we will say how can we -- you and I both
21 know these teachers are not doing well. I have been to
22 some horrific schools, and the answer is this is the best

1 I can find, and they do not have a conception that it
2 really can change.

3 We are going to prove that we can bring human
4 capital into these places. We have already done it. One
5 year, this past year we have already provided teachers in
6 Madison Parish in Tallulah, and now Madison is in as a
7 participating LEA. They are beginning to believe it can
8 be done.

9 I do believe that on the pressure side, it will
10 be there, but on the resource side, if we can really
11 build a pipeline, and that is why the pipeline is to us
12 so extremely important, if we can build a pipeline,
13 people are going to gravitate to it because they want the
14 schools to do better, they don't want them to be taken
15 over, but they don't know really how they are going to
16 get that resource.

17 I think that is what we will provide, and I
18 think we are going to prove it, and I think it will catch
19 fire really good.

20 Reviewer #1: Rayne, you had a point?

21 MS. MARTIN: Sure, just from the grant
22 perspective a second because I think one of the things we

1 have learned, having experience with deep reform at the
2 Recovery School District, is a lot of these reforms
3 require heavy financial investment on the front end.

4 So, you will also notice that a lot of the
5 things that are in the grant actually are things that are
6 easily scalable. Our data systems are things that once
7 you set up, require regular maintenance and license fees
8 to buy into.

9 Once you get a pipeline started, and you focus
10 on retention and have principal contracts, that actually
11 are also focused on retention, you have built big piles
12 of human capital throughout the state, so a lot of this
13 in addition to catching fire through the rest of the
14 state, deliberately the budget is set up to invest in
15 things on the front end that we know actually are needed
16 and would invest in the entire State once we do scale up.

17 Reviewer #1: We're going to reorder here
18 because it is just a natural followup.

19 The RSD is at the heart of what you are doing,
20 you have made that clear to us, we understand that very
21 clearly.

22 Help us understand what the relationship going

1 forward is going to be between the RSD and the State
2 Education Agency, because we know we have got great
3 examples across the country. That is in one place, and
4 when you go to take it broadly, it doesn't hold.

5 So, we are trying to understand that. Help us
6 understand that. Again, we are about 10, 11 minutes in,
7 so we have to keep an eye on the clock.

8 MS. BUQUET: May I speak? I would like to
9 speak from the teacher angle, as well as how it is
10 spreads. I have got on the Board of Education, what I
11 call the hurricane district, we are all down at the
12 bottom, along the coast. As such, we are right next to
13 the original RSD, and when you talk about spread and what
14 happens, I want to tell you a story.

15 When we started out accountability system, my
16 district superintendent almost had me hung because I told
17 them I was going to vote, and they were for an
18 accountability system, and they were all against it.

19 I want you to know that today, my district is
20 100 percent in this reform effort. You know, success
21 does breed success, and because they are right there, and
22 they see what is happening in New Orleans, and it is

1 proven we can do better, it is amazing the cultural
2 change that has happened right there, and that is why we
3 believe it can spread and will spread.

4 Now, my district is normally, if you look,
5 their scores are in right about the middle of the space.
6 They have taken what we are doing and put in place so
7 many different segments, if you will, of what Race to the
8 Top is doing.

9 For instance, parishes are already putting in
10 this is why they believe they can do it, is they have put
11 in the system of teacher incentive pay that isn't just
12 exactly like TAP, but they believe that it works even
13 better, and why they work it.

14 In one particular district, it is amazing,
15 money doesn't do everything, but they went from an 80 to
16 low 90s in one year. Did money do it all? No, it
17 certainly did focus everybody's attention on can we do
18 this.

19 We have, in that parish, two of the low
20 performing -- I mean high performing, low --

21 MR. PASTOREK: High performing, high poverty.

22 MS. BUQUET: Thank you.

1 It is amazing now that the others think, oh, my
2 gosh, they are doing it right here, my neighbor 10 miles
3 away has done it, and it is being recognized on the
4 state, and we have taken to show them off. It does
5 create the relief system that is very important for
6 teachers. Teachers want every bit of the improvement we
7 can get.

8 MR. VALLAS: Just a quick comment. I will be
9 quick. I can't stress enough the degree to which
10 statewide reforms and the building of statewide capacity
11 is going to have an impact on all the schools from the
12 assessment system to the pushing of TAP statewide, et
13 cetera.

14 Obviously, that is in the application, and I
15 don't need to go into that in detail, but that is going
16 to have a major impact, that is number one.

17 Number two. I also can't stress enough the
18 degree to which funding is being reprogrammed, the same
19 way the Federal Government is pushing to have grants
20 competitively, so you can demonstrate how you are using
21 money properly. It's the same thing. Dollars being
22 reprogrammed to push RSD type funds.

1 Third, the RSD itself. All the schools that
2 are participating in Race to the Top are, in fact, being
3 given RSD authority. In other words, the same authority,
4 to site select, to no tenure, no seniority, the ability
5 to restructure your day, the implementation of TAP.

6 So, all the schools, the 50 percent of the kids
7 that will be in the 28 districts participating, these
8 districts are being given RSD type authority, RSD freedom
9 of flexibility, and an RSD type pipeline to impose RSD
10 type of funds.

11 Finally, the schools that are not
12 participating, if they continue to fail, will be brought
13 under the RSD either directly through RSD control or the
14 40 schools that we have today that are in what we refer
15 to as MOUs, where they agree to embrace RSD reforms in
16 return for us not taking over the day-to-day management.

17 So, I think that is the way the RSD is going to
18 have an impact.

19 Reviewer #4: What we are trying to get at I
20 think is how is the RSD and the State agency, your State
21 Department of Education, going to interact, and what is
22 the role or your State Board of Education in all of this,

1 trying to ramp us.

2 MR. VALLAS: Let me answer the first one, and
3 then it will just be the RSD interactions. First of all,
4 there is different types of RSD. There is the RSD
5 takeover where we are going in and we actually physically
6 run the schools, or we work to charter the schools.

7 Then, the second type of RSD takeover is where
8 we go in and we enter into memorandums of understanding,
9 school improvement plans, and then we provide the
10 technical support teams working with those schools to
11 implement those plans, so that is how the RSD impacts
12 districts, who are either running districts, chartering
13 districts, or we are designing the school improvement
14 plans and the providing the technical supports for the
15 implementation of those plans.

16 If you look outside New Orleans, the vast
17 majority of schools that the RSD is in, is actually
18 through MOU, the memorandums of understanding.

19 MR. PASTOREK: Can I just ask you to clarify
20 your question a little bit, because I am not sure --

21 Reviewer #4: We are curious about what the
22 role of your State Board of Education is in this whole

1 thing, and the unions, too. You referred to what
2 happened with the unions.

3 MR. PASTOREK: The RSD, Paul Vallas runs the
4 RSD. He reports directly to me, and technically, I am
5 the CEO of the Recovery School District as the state
6 superintendent, so I actually have two hats, state
7 superintendent, CEO of the Recovery School District . I
8 report to the board.

9 So, the RSD is an instrument of the board at
10 the end of the day. Now, I have autonomy to operate the
11 RSD, and there are only a limited number of decisions
12 that are made by the board. The real decision that is
13 made by the board is in certain cases, it is optional to
14 take schools, in other cases, it is mandatory to take
15 schools.

16 In those optional cases, the board has the
17 decision on taking them. So, what has happened is, for
18 example, in Baton Rouge, two years ago, I made a
19 recommendation to take over four schools and Pointe
20 Coupee Parish, one school, and in Shreveport, to do an
21 MOU. The Board approved that recommendation, we took
22 those schools over, and Paul runs those schools.

1 That will continue on, and the legislation that
2 is out there allows for the Recovery School District
3 taxpayer continue on and every five years, the recovery
4 school district, I have to make a recommendation on
5 whether or not to return schools, and if so, under that
6 conditions.

7 [Simultaneous speaking.]

8 Reviewer #1: Let's keep moving here, but I
9 think a question that we have, you have got excellence
10 for RSD, that's clear, you have documented, we know that,
11 but then going through the rest of this session, I want
12 to keep an eye on the clock, we have about 40 minutes
13 left, help us see how when you take RSD statewide, how
14 that power of RSD is still going to hold, because a
15 number of questions you ask, you can layer that into the
16 answer.

17 MS. BUQUET: I am a member of the State Board,
18 and I want to say that the RSD is directly under the
19 State Board. We are the local school board

20 MR. PASTOREK: You are asking a different
21 question.

22 Reviewer #1: I am asking, you have got a way

1 RSD operates, and Mr. Vallas is there and his team, and
2 how you go statewide. How do you have that same power
3 and strength work statewide?

4 MR. VALLAS: I would like to answer that.
5 There is three keys to RSD success. As someone who has
6 been in a number of major districts, these are the three
7 things that -- there is three reasons that
8 superintendents continually say why they can't improve
9 your scores.

10 Reason number one is they don't know what the
11 best practices are, they don't know what the models are,
12 they don't know what the best curriculum is, benchmark,
13 assessments, TAP, they don't know any of that stuff.

14 Number two, they have too many obstacles,
15 seniority, tenure, they can't site select their
16 individuals.

17 Number three, there is no human capital
18 pipeline, so even if they wanted to get rid of people,
19 they don't want to have to replace what is there.

20 What the RSD does, and what the Race to the Top
21 does, schools that the RSD takes over or schools that are
22 in Race to the Top, that are exempt from RSD takeover is

1 they get those three things.

2 Number one, they get the best practices that we
3 have articulated in great detail in our presentation. It
4 is provided to them, lock, stock, and barrel.

5 Number two, they get complete freedom. There
6 is only one district, only one district in all the
7 participating districts where the collective bargaining
8 agreement can preempt the board's commitment to RSD-type
9 reforms.

10 So, there is no obstacle to hiring and firing,
11 and making personnel decisions based on best
12 qualifications.

13 Number three, they get the RSD pipeline. If
14 you look at what made the RSD successful, it wasn't me,
15 it was new schools in New Orleans with their pipeline of
16 new principals and new teachers, but we are creating
17 similar management organizations, support management
18 organizations throughout the state to provide supports
19 for districts throughout the state. So, those are the
20 three things, and that is how the RSD-type model can be
21 impacted.

22 Reviewer #1: Our next question, then, I am

1 keeping this moving, so we will let you talk.

2 Reviewer #2: I want to slice it a little bit
3 finer. Much of what is in your application and what you
4 have talked about today really rests on improvements that
5 the RSD has made, and the RSD is a subset of the state.

6 Where I am asking a different kind of question,
7 is what is everybody else in the SEA doing? It sounds
8 like the RSD is doing all the reform work, so in your
9 application, you said there is going to be a major shift
10 from compliance monitoring to more support and service.

11 How are you going to get them? Not the RSD,
12 how is the rest of your capacity going to be built?

13 MR. PASTOREK: Well, excellent question.

14 Reviewer #2: Thank you.

15 Reviewer #1: We like it, too.

16 MR. PASTOREK: When I first took this position,
17 again relying on something Michael Pullen [ph] had
18 explained to me, we needed to develop capacity in our
19 schools statewide, because accountability without support
20 or capacity building is not going to win the day.

21 So we built what we refer to as our literacy
22 and numeracy strategy. I pulled some very high quality

1 people from within the organization, pulled them out on
2 the side, and I called it our literacy and numeracy
3 initiative.

4 It is led by a very fine former superintendent,
5 it is a very small team of people, but we have used some
6 resources that we have gotten from the State to do K-4
7 real strong capacity building. It is all about our staff
8 in the Department and our people in our people in the
9 regional service centers working very closely with
10 principals, superintendents, really, teachers in the
11 building on capacity building.

12 Now, we have really -- it put us heavy on the
13 literacy side. We are getting ready to ramp it up on the
14 numeracy side. We are going to actually ramp it around
15 STEM as opposed to limited on numeracy.

16 Then, the third area, so it's going to be
17 literacy, it is literacy, going to be STEM, and the other
18 area of focus has been what we call high school redesign.

19 So, around high schools, we also need to build
20 the capacity of the local school district around
21 graduation rates, dropout prevention, ninth-grade
22 academies, you know, et cetera, et cetera.

1 But we knew their total strategy to capacity
2 build those principals, and the assistant principals, and
3 the teachers in the high school setting to transform them
4 from where they are to where they need to be.

5 That capacity building piece then works in
6 conjunction with the recovery school district, and we
7 look at recovery school district as the R&D for the DOE.

8 It is R&D, and then those experiences
9 translated into the literacy and the soon to be the STEM
10 group as well as the high school redesign group, so we
11 can share, okay. They are doing it in the classrooms
12 themselves, under our auspices, where we actually can
13 control classrooms, we can monitor the results and make
14 changes in the job.

15 Whereas, for people in the DOE are taking those
16 learnings or their own knowledge and working the
17 capacity. So, on the scaling up issue, we are not just
18 going to say we are just going to focus on these LEAs
19 here that are participating, we still will have -- and it
20 is going to be a strong effort around literacy.

21 In fact, we just wrote out an adolescent
22 literacy program, which has been very well received,

1 because that is really our heart and soul problem in our
2 state.

3 Reviewer #1: We can circle back. Reviewer #5
4 , I am going to change gears, but keep an eye on the
5 theme.

6 Reviewer #5: Changing gears. Could someone or
7 some of you provide some examples of the role of higher
8 education?

9 MR. PASTOREK: Sure. Ms. Buquet can do that.

10 MS. BUQUET: Yes. I've been co-chair of our
11 Blue Ribbon Commission since 1999. That actually is the
12 brain child [inaudible] and board of regents and
13 [inaudible]. I co-chaired that since its inception and
14 we are really very proud of the fact that we have had so
15 much success in working with. We came out with 62
16 recommendations in our very first couple of years, and it
17 took time to institute that. [Inaudible.] We continue
18 that. We meet with the dean's Council monthly, and we
19 have monthly ribbon commission meetings where the board
20 of regents and our state board co-chair this.

21 Every year we take a particular item in which
22 to focus. We bring in teacher groups from across the

1 state, and it is wonderful. These teachers want so much
2 for things to improve and for them to know how to do it.
3 They come in with no pay, no lunch, they come in and do
4 the task force and tell us what they feel they need in
5 the classroom.

6 We feel that we have really worked hard to make
7 sure that the colleges of Ed, do the pre-services of work
8 that coincides with an alliance with our K through 12
9 accountability system. We went through that. For the K
10 through 12 content standard, the deans well understand
11 that there are new content standards coming down on the
12 national level, and they are watching it as they have
13 never been watched before, what happens in K through 12,
14 and we are really very, very happy about the coordination
15 that is going on.

16 It is data driven, and that is what makes it
17 work. If we didn't have the data, we would never be able
18 to make these reforms work, but our data system has put
19 in the accountability system for our colleges of
20 education that tracks the accountability system we did in
21 K through 12.

22 Now that we can look back to the colleges of

1 ed., we see the scores of students who were taught in our
2 classrooms back to the colleges of ed., who taught this
3 teacher. We now track that, and we have a system that is
4 published by it, and everyone can see what the colleges
5 of ed. teachers are doing in the system.

6 So, there is a tremendous amount of work with
7 higher ed.

8 MR. PASTOREK: I am going to let Rayne mention
9 a couple of the connections that we have with IRED [ph]
10 going forward and especially in Race to the Top because
11 that is a very powerful part of our strategy.

12 MS. MARTIN: Absolutely. There is a number of
13 initiatives that speak specifically to what the
14 coordination is going to be. One of those in particular
15 is working with us on our common standards. They are
16 actually going to be helping us as a state look at the
17 crosswalk and make sure that we have appropriate vertical
18 alignment and again because they want to make sure that
19 as we adopt a common standard, that they are, in fact,
20 there is an alignment there between the K-12 system and
21 the higher ed. system, as well.

22 We are also working very hard with them on the

1 teacher preparation programs. We want to make sure that
2 as we adopt common standards, and as we identify the
3 appropriate level of professional development, that we
4 start that even before the teachers are actually in the
5 K-12 system.

6 So, the teacher preparation programs that are
7 ready to move forward or actually, also, they are going
8 to include a lot of the data systems we talk about, HCSI.
9 We are going to start putting them into the teacher
10 preparation program.

11 The common standards and assessment manage
12 curriculum models, will also be taught in the teacher
13 preparation programs.

14 We also have gotten them to agree to assist us
15 in creating urban teaching residencies. We are going to
16 have three of our best universities that produce teachers
17 actually work with us to create what is a newer model in
18 education, that we are pretty excited about, which is
19 allow teachers to come in through an alternative route,
20 but be in the classroom for a full year and be getting
21 coursework at the same time.

22 So, that is a newer thing that we are actually

1 really, really excited about, and then the last thing is
2 because we can tell which of our programs are the best
3 teacher preparation programs, we also are working with
4 the higher ed. institutions to actually dedicate stipends
5 specifically for teachers who are willing to go to those
6 specific universities and actually teach in high need
7 subjects and areas. There is stipends in the way of
8 7,500 apiece and I think we put about almost 300 of those
9 into our application.

10 Reviewer #1: Real high around research and
11 evaluation. Any role there at all?

12 MS. MARTIN: Yes. I mean, that role will
13 continue, that role has been there from the very
14 beginning in terms of the value added piece, and so that
15 will continue.

16 One of the things that we are hoping will
17 happen is because we will have so much robust data
18 throughout the system, is that as we collect that, we are
19 going to be giving that to the higher institutions, and
20 one of the things they will be doing different with the
21 Race to the Top is actually helping us evaluate all of
22 our PD programs both at the State level and at the

1 district level, because we want to again, just like we
2 did with the teacher prep programs, we want to be able to
3 narrow it down specifically what professional development
4 programs are working well in our high schools and
5 elementary schools, as well.

6 Reviewer #1: We are going to move to now,
7 again switching gears a bit, but there are strong themes
8 here.

9 Reviewer #3: I wondered whether one of you
10 might or many of you might like to expand on your
11 thoughts about the science and technology, math area in
12 your plan?

13 Reviewer #1: You have got about 28 minutes
14 left.

15 Reviewer #3: You can use the whole 28 if you
16 want.

17 [Laughter.]

18 Reviewer #1: I recommend not.

19 MR. PASTOREK: I worked at NASA for a couple of
20 years, and became infused by the importance of this for
21 our country. We had what we refer to as Louisiana
22 systemics initiative program, which has really been about

1 building a capacity of mathematics teachers in the state.
2 It has been underway for some time, and if you actually
3 look at our numbers, you will see that our math numbers
4 are higher than our ELA numbers in the state.

5 But that is a slow and steady piece, so we have
6 ramped it up with another similar program where the
7 universities are actually working with teachers in the
8 summer, and we are building that capacity of those
9 teachers to be able to provide high quality teaching and
10 learning.

11 The teen center is a math/science enterprise,
12 part of LSU, and we have some tremendous mathematics
13 folks over there. I was hoping that we can get someone
14 over there to really lead our effort.

15 We have grand designs on this, but this is
16 early stages. Now, we are -- I will go ahead and turn it
17 over to you, and let you make a couple of comments.

18 MS. MARTIN: In addition, you will notice in
19 the application that we put a heavy emphasis on Advanced
20 Placement. One of the things that we really need to
21 focus on in Louisiana is Advanced Placement, and we have
22 budgeted for and anticipate having 600 additional

1 teachers in the Advanced Placement and training programs
2 that we have around the State, and a lot of those,
3 probably I would say 60 to 70 percent of those courses
4 are going to be geared towards the STEM initiatives.

5 Reviewer #3: Just to press on a little more,
6 what sort of strategies would you have to, say, increase
7 the participation of girls in science, math, engineering?
8 Have you given any thought to that, is that in your plan?

9 MR. PASTOREK: I don't think that it's in our
10 plan as we have described the plan. I do think that's in
11 our conception. We have actually put on two conferences
12 in Louisiana targeted toward young ladies to get them
13 exposed to the STEM area.

14 Sally Ride, a former astronaut, has come at my
15 request to Louisiana for that very purpose, to stimulate
16 and put on fairs for girls to become more interested in
17 that. I really do think that whether or not we focus on
18 girls or boys, we really need to focus on it all, in a
19 much deeper way.

20 MS. CARTER PETERSON: If we could just add to
21 that point, I mean in Louisiana, certainly post-Katrina,
22 we're experiencing some things that other states are not.

1 A little example of the health care industry. We are
2 rebuilding the charity hospital system there. We are
3 also building a new VA hospital, which happens to be
4 located in that district. I am working really hard with
5 the math and science high schools to be located in that
6 district.

7 So, we have some unique opportunities to really
8 tie together the health care industry, which we know is
9 going to need over 13,000 jobs in the next few years, and
10 make sure that we are aware of the curriculum in high
11 schools, to make sure that the children and the students
12 are prepared to take advantage of the job opportunities.

13 So there is huge connect between we know where
14 these jobs are, we know that math and sciences are a
15 priority, and making sure that we feed the right
16 population, the student population into these fields,
17 just because it's just to sustain ourselves. Inevitably,
18 it is happening.

19 Reviewer #3: Thank you.

20 Reviewer #1: Other questions or comments on
21 STEM before we shift gears?

22 Reviewer #3: No, I am good.

1 Reviewer #1: Two questions coming your way.
2 We have got 23 minutes left. We are doing well.

3 Reviewer #4: I want to give you the
4 opportunity to clarify what was in the proposal exactly
5 about what the role of your State board of education is
6 going to be, and also the role of the teachers' unions
7 that you referred to earlier.

8 MR. PASTOREK: Let me start with the Teachers'
9 Unions and Association. Notwithstanding some anxiety by
10 one of the teachers' unions, we are going to pull all of
11 these players in to build our comprehensive performance
12 management system, which is really the thing I think that
13 gave the concern to one of the unions.

14 So, I think we made it clear in the
15 application, but I will make it clearer now, all of those
16 people need to be at the table as well as the Association
17 of Professional Educators of Louisiana to help build
18 this.

19 We know that we are not going to be successful
20 with teachers if they don't have buy-in, and we know that
21 we are not going to be successful trying to implement
22 something that looks like it is top down.

1 So, have tried to set the parameters here, but
2 we have made it very clear to the associations and the
3 teachers out there that they are participants in helping
4 us build this. We will build it together. We will build
5 it around the framers, but we are going to allow
6 flexibility within those parameters to make it work.

7 The other thing we have said, and I think it is
8 what got us the support that we did get, was that we are
9 going to look at the results and we are going to assure
10 that the results are fair and reliable, and to the extent
11 that there is concern over the fairness and liability of
12 it, we are going to adjust.

13 I think that was a very important reason why we
14 were able to get the Louisiana Federation of Teachers on
15 board, and why we were easily able to get the Association
16 of Professional Educators of Louisiana on board.

17 The same is true for the Principals'
18 Association. I think in terms of the Board, the Board's
19 role in the application frankly is to see to it that the
20 nine goals are met. So, the Department has set forth in
21 the RFP that there are four goals, but we've taken it
22 down to a level of we look at high leverage areas for how

1 we will get to the four goals that are being proposed by
2 the Department.

3 So, we have nine goals in there, which talk
4 about readiness for kindergarten, making kids get to
5 fourth grade on time, those kinds of things, and the
6 Board adopted those rolls as ones which were important to
7 it as ones which thought we would do at high leverage to
8 be able to accomplish that.

9 They basically told me that my job is to meet
10 the targets. Now, this is a little bit unusual, the
11 State Department of Education is committed to meeting
12 targets, and that is why we went -- and I hope it wasn't
13 terribly confusing -- but we went through a lot of
14 trouble in the application to show you how we are going
15 to assign people to be responsible for targets, real
16 numbers and how we are going to move those numbers, and I
17 think that is part of the Board's role, and then I think
18 the other part of the Board's role is to gain buy-in from
19 all of the communities out there that we can possibly
20 gain buy-in from.

21 The Board is mostly elected. It is eight
22 elected members and three appointed by the governor, so

1 it's a strong grass-roots political. Bottom up
2 organization and they are accountable to their local
3 school districts and the ethnic communities, so they
4 really heard the piece that modulates us to make the
5 strong contact throughout the State.

6 MR. VALLAS: I am going to make one comment.
7 That is unique to make them on school boards across the
8 State because they are almost an independent legislative
9 body. So they can really insulate these reforms from
10 changes in attitudes, changes in administration, as Karen
11 pointed out.

12 I mean, it really is kind of unique. They set
13 the MFP, the funding levels and everything, and they are
14 firmly supportive of this.

15 Just one little footnote. It took 10 minutes
16 for UTNO to sign on, and they're, the Recovery School
17 District union, it took them 10 minutes to commit to Race
18 to the Top.

19 We have had a great relationship despite the
20 aggressive Race to the Top policies because we are very
21 collaborative.

22 Reviewer #1: I want to go to the next

1 question. Any other comments on this?

2 Reviewer #2: Would you please explain the
3 extent to which your examples of innovative, autonomous
4 public schools meet the RTT definition? In particular,
5 we are interested in hearing about staff selection and
6 removal as well as budget control.

7 MR. PASTOREK: Rayne?

8 MS. MARTIN: No.

9 MR. PASTOREK: Paul?

10 MR. VALLAS: Let me just say that Louisiana is
11 also unique in that the tenure laws are not as
12 constrictive as they are in other states, so our ability
13 to remove ineffective teachers even within -- even those
14 tenure teachers is significantly more streamlined than it
15 is, say, in other states like Illinois or even
16 Pennsylvania, with the tenure laws, can sometimes be
17 almost as restrictive as seniority laws.

18 But the schools going to participate in Race to
19 the Top are given RSD type authority to in effect site
20 select the personnel. So, in other words, what they have
21 to do is they can pick people irregardless of their
22 levels of seniority, and they can in effect move

1 ineffective teachers out of the system as long as they
2 can provide proper documentation.

3 That removal process is an expedited process.
4 It doesn't require another year of observation or another
5 year of support. You see what I mean?

6 So, the ability to, in effect, control the
7 hiring of your own personnel and to control -- and to
8 make determinations based on a site-selection basis in
9 terms of recruitment and retention and promotion, that
10 autonomy -- the RSD has that autonomy it actually has
11 that autonomy in schools that participated in Race to the
12 Top also had the autonomy, and schools that come within
13 the RSD jurisdiction even through MOU are required to
14 have that autonomy.

15 Now, in terms of, obviously, the budget,
16 schools in the RSD for the most part, the majority of
17 them are charters, and they have their own financial
18 economy. They are their own LEA, so they are provided
19 money, and they make the determination on how to set
20 their budget priorities within the construct, so within
21 the guidelines that the State sets, obviously, for the
22 use of Federal and State funds for all districts, but

1 they are not micromanaged by central office. It is
2 really kind of support and accountability as opposed to
3 us running the day-to-day, managing the day-to-day
4 budgets of these schools.

5 MR. PASTOREK: Just to be absolutely clear
6 here, where we are talking about schools particularly in
7 high performing schools initiative, where they are using
8 school improvement grant money where the requirement is
9 that all principals will be in charge of the building,
10 more site select, and we will manage the resources that
11 they have to run the buildings, so that should be
12 unambiguous.

13 I do think that one of the reasons why a number
14 of the districts wanted to participate is because they
15 wanted to migrate to this situation, where principals are
16 stronger in the building and have [inaudible].

17 I think we've begun recognize in the State that
18 that is an important piece, and I think it is entirely
19 consistent with Race to the Top.

20 If we didn't make that clear --

21 Reviewer #5: Can I just add a question? I am
22 a little confused about the RSD. You stated the three

1 kinds of RSD schools. Those are one set, most of which
2 are charters, you said.

3 MR. VALLAS: The majority of schools in the RSD
4 that are run directly or direct-run schools are charters.

5 MR. PASTOREK: That is 60 percent.

6 Reviewer #5: So, you have schools of
7 innovation that are not charters. They belong to the
8 district, they were run by the district. Are those the
9 school improvement schools that you just spoke about? I
10 am trying to figure out where these autonomies happen
11 outside of district control.

12 Reviewer #1: You mean outside of RSD.

13 MR. PASTOREK: Let's be real clear about this.
14 The schools that are in the RSD, are in the RSD, they are
15 taken away from the districts, they have no control.
16 Now, the districts have schools that are at risk of being
17 taken over, over 200 schools, now that we have raised
18 that bar.

19 All those schools are eligible for school
20 improvement grant money, but priority is being given to
21 those districts that are participating in Race to the
22 Top.

1 In all of those schools outside of the recovery
2 school district, so in Assumption Parish, their school.
3 They are going to take that school and grant autonomy to
4 the principal to do site selection to pay the budget, et
5 cetera.

6 Now, we are going to do that over time to get
7 people up to speed, but all of the participating LEAs
8 have all of their schools, and all of those schools are
9 going to behave in the manner that we are describing,
10 separate and distinct from the RSD.

11 Reviewer #5: Thank you.

12 Reviewer #1: I am going to limit this
13 question, shifting gears a bit. We have got about 13
14 minutes left, we are going to try and leave some time, so
15 you will have a chance to kind of throw things together
16 We have got about 13 minutes left.

17 Reviewer #5: Could you please share with us
18 the strategies that you are going to be using to make
19 sure that there is more equitable distribution of
20 effective teachers and principals across
21 difficult-to-staff schools, special populations in
22 different subject areas.

1 MR. PASTOREK: I am going to give a real brief
2 piece and turn it over to Rayne. I want to make sure
3 that we understand that ask those outsiders of a
4 recovery school district. All those in the participating
5 LEAs will follow the strategy that will be outlined here
6 because we have a very specific strategy carefully
7 constructed about assuring that there will be effective
8 teachers throughout, and not rolling up into individual
9 schools.

10 MS. MARTIN: Great question. This is one of
11 the things that we were most proud about in terms of
12 strategy behind our plan, because we do have some areas
13 that are rural and definitely, it is hard to staff and
14 the schools that are low achieving.

15 So, right now we actually have pipelines into
16 the State, again, to distinguish that have been working
17 with RSD, and those are generating about 500 teachers a
18 year.

19 We have already had discussions around
20 expanding those teachers because quite honestly, in New
21 Orleans, we built a piece, human capital based within our
22 school.

1 So, those providers that have been providing,
2 those teachers are going to expand out through the state.

3 We are also going to increase that pipeline by
4 another 500 annually, and we are going to do that by
5 taking, creating five different locations throughout this
6 thing, that will be into the participating area, so that
7 we have actually got mechanisms within the local
8 communities that are attracting both local and national
9 talent. These are providers that we have worked with on
10 a national level already in Louisiana or, again, have
11 been identified as a better teacher preparation program
12 through a value-added analysis on teacher programs in
13 Louisiana.

14 We're proud to say, that by doing that, there
15 should be no district that is more than 40 minutes from
16 one of these locations that we are going to have staged
17 throughout the State.

18 That gets to the supply issue, but there are
19 two other parts of the strategy. One is to make sure
20 that we actually build enough capacity in the districts
21 themselves to identify key vacancies, to project where
22 those vacancies are going to be, and actually take

1 advantage of the pipeline.

2 So, we are going to be doing surveying. There
3 goes my name, here I am.

4 We are going to be creating district capacity,
5 first, by actually finding out where we actually have
6 these vacancies, and have the district figure out where
7 we have those. Eventually, we will have the human
8 capital information system, but we are not going to wait
9 for that, we are going to start that process now.

10 We are going to fund and pay districts to
11 actually have what we call modest staffing initiative.
12 They are people who will go into districts and help with
13 best practices around recruitment, identification of
14 talent, placement of talent, and it is something again we
15 are really excited about, and then the third part of the
16 strategy is really to incentivize people, and we are
17 going to do that in two ways. First of all, again,
18 really taking advantage of the fact that we are the only
19 state that can tell the key difference between the high
20 quality teacher preparation programs for individuals that
21 are willing to go to those, and to go to a high need area
22 whether that being based on performance or locale or

1 subjects.

2 We will give those individuals stipends, so
3 like I said, we are very excited about this part of our
4 strategy.

5 Reviewer #1: Any follow-on?

6 Reviewer #4: In the special populations part
7 of that?

8 MS. MARTIN: Yes, that will apply as well.

9 Reviewer #3: Science, tech and math teachers?
10 How big is the stipend?

11 MS. MARTIN: The stipend is \$7,500.

12 Reviewer #3: And how long do I get it?

13 MS. MARTIN: You get it for I think it is up to
14 three years you get it.

15 Reviewer #5: And are all these strategies just
16 with teachers or with your leaders?

17 MS. MARTIN: they're for both.

18 MR. PASTOREK: Remember that both for
19 principals and superintendents, you wanted the principal
20 objectives for each one of those in their performance
21 evaluation is whether they are able to bring in more
22 effective teachers.

1 So, we have tried to create a circumstance
2 where they are incented themselves and their job is
3 really to bring effective teachers and grow the number of
4 effective teachers in their building or in the school
5 from the superintendent's perspective.

6 I think that is a pretty interesting way of
7 looking at it as opposed to saying we want your academic
8 achievement to go up. We really want your teacher corps
9 to be effective, and you have the obligation to build
10 that teacher corps into an effective teacher corps, and
11 you are going to be able to use these stipends in order
12 to be able to do that whether it is for special
13 populations or math or science, whatever is weak.

14 That is where the human capital information
15 system comes in, because it is going to allow us to be
16 able to monitor this and provide support, and then if
17 there is gaps, we can help at the State level by then
18 routing some of the pipeline pieces.

19 Reviewer #5: Thank you.

20 Reviewer #1: I have a couple of clarifying
21 questions I want to ask in my current role as
22 facilitator, so these are kind of quick hits but very

1 important.

2 I have heard you talk about the ability of the
3 State to intervene LEAs and in schools, is that in
4 statute and legally clear that you can intervene as a
5 State and low performing LEAs and low performing schools?

6 MR. PASTOREK: The rule now is to focus on
7 schools. There was a period where we could intervene in
8 LEAs, but it was still around schools, so we do not take
9 over LEAs. We do not take over LEAs. We take over
10 schools.

11 Reviewer #1: So you work at the school level.

12 MR. PASTOREK: That's right. Now, I will tell
13 you the effect is powerful because, for example, we have
14 three schools in St. Helena and five schools in Madison,
15 and all of those schools can be taken over because they
16 are all at the level that can be, and so the effect is we
17 take the school and then we have the whole districts.

18 So, it really accomplishes the same thing, but
19 technically, you are right, we don't take over LEAs.

20 Reviewer #1: I have a question that team here
21 knows about, is alternative pathways are a very
22 significant part of the RTT effort. Help us see how, in

1 your plans, they all really are alternative, particularly
2 as you think about flexibility in courses, flexibility
3 around how free they are at the higher ed. structure.

4 Again, you have not got about less than six
5 minutes.

6 MS. BUQUET: We have created the pathways, and
7 it comes, of course, in cooperation again with higher
8 ed., as well as private providers. We have alternate
9 certification in both areas.

10 We have also, on our level, created a policy of
11 accountability for those, and using the value-added, we
12 go in and we actually look at the effectiveness of the
13 teachers from both areas.

14 So it is a coordinated effort, but we do have
15 it open for private providers in various ways, and they
16 come before [inaudible] providers.

17 Before we end, I do have to say something from
18 a teacher angle. So often it seems to me today we have
19 talked about what you can do to teachers it almost sounds
20 like. If I were the teacher, I am listening to that. I
21 want teachers to know that we are there to help them, and
22 that they are not just doing it.

1 When we talk about things in tenure, we talk
2 about taking over schools, we are talking about support
3 for the future, and we realize that communication is a
4 huge part of that.

5 Knowing that teachers want to do the best they
6 can for their students, we want to communicate to them
7 about career ladders, about pay-for-performance, about
8 mentors and coaches, and how they can stay in the
9 classroom where they love and still have that career
10 ladder.

11 Knowing we have a communication area, we have
12 worked with the National Governors Association and I'm
13 very happy to tell you that when they saw what we wanted
14 to do and who we were talking to about hiring, they said
15 "we're going to give you the grant and we're going to
16 get[noise interruption] -- the communications person for
17 you to do that. We think that is very significant as a
18 way of getting the teachers to understand we are for you.

19 Reviewer #1: Thank you. On the alternative
20 pathways, any other comments on that, helping us
21 understand?

22 MS. MARTIN: You are just trying to understand

1 the level of what flexibility?

2 Reviewer #1: There are many issues. I mean
3 there is a very definite definition in the application in
4 terms of how selective programs are, how score based the
5 programs are, how flexible they are in coursework.

6 We have about three minutes left, and there may
7 be some other thoughts.

8 MS. MARTIN: In terms of both?

9 Reviewer #1: What you propose.

10 MS. MARTIN: Specific pieces.

11 Reviewer #1: Yes.

12 MS. MARTIN: Well, what we are proposing, we
13 actually -- because I am sure you know this -- D1
14 actually talks a lot about the conditions of the existing
15 alternative programs. We actually believe we have one of
16 the most robust and one of the most diverse set of
17 alternative programs within the State.

18 So, really, our strategy in our application is
19 to continue to allow that and to expand that. One
20 example of expansion would be, for instance, the urban
21 residency program that I talked about.

22 That again is the unique thing even around the

1 country, and would again add another type of alternative
2 flexibility program, we actually are really satisfied
3 with the ones that we have, and we continue to actually
4 use a lot of those to fuel the pipeline that I talked
5 about earlier.

6 So, the strategy is to expand it and add the
7 urban residency program.

8 Reviewer #2: The place where I am not clear is
9 you talk about the alternative pathways. They appear to
10 in some way be connected to higher ed. Do you have any
11 that are not?

12 [Simultaneous speaking.]

13 MS. MARTIN: Yes, absolutely, and I would
14 entertain to say angle. It is probably half and half.

15 Reviewer #2: Can you tell us? When I read the
16 application, I couldn't distinguish who could go straight
17 through that. Another provider that is not also taking
18 coursework in higher ed.

19 MS. MARTIN: So, we have, for instance, TFA is
20 a big part of our alternative certification program. We
21 use the leaders. I mean it would be helpful to give
22 those examples?

1 MR. PASTOREK: Let me just make this clear.
2 All of our alternative pathways that don't reside in the
3 universities are independent of that person, don't
4 require any connection.

5 Reviewer #3: Paul, do you have some final
6 remarks?

7 MR. PASTOREK: I want to go back to the union
8 question and make sure I am clear with you. While the
9 state union LAE was resistant, there are a number of
10 learnable LAE organizations that are supportive. In
11 fact, in one of the collective bargaining districts, the
12 political LAE union signed on.

13 So we do have other support in the unions, and
14 just the State organization pushback on that.

15 Let me say that we believe that this is a very
16 bold plan. Because so many things that we have already
17 done make in many cases the requirements that you have
18 set out. Where you going to go extremely bold, which we
19 feel that we have done, it is not for everybody, and if
20 you are going to scale up, you have to scale up over a
21 period of time.

22 I really believe that that is Race to the Top

1 is all about, it is not about trying to get everybody at
2 one time, it is trying to do and put the right amount of
3 resources in the right place to make it work.

4 Thank you all very much.

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